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Claim 11 was rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Blaker, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,581,636) or Teslawski, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,517,985), in either case in view of Herres (U.S. Patent No. 5,070,879) or Haverl (U.S. Patent No. 4,137,777). Claims 14 and 17-18 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combinations above for claim 11, and further in view of Dunham (U.S. Patent No. 6,080,108). Claims 1, 3-10, 12-13 and 20-24 were allowed. Claims 15-16 and 19 were objected to as allowable if amended into independent form. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections of claims 11, 14, and 17-18, including independent claims 11 and 14.

Independent claim 11 recites determining first and second velocity parameters of a mechanically rocked array at different positions with the velocity parameter being different at the different positions and setting scan positions by setting a spatial relationship of previously acquired data as a function of the velocity parameters. None of the four cited references discloses determining velocity parameters that are different at different positions.

Blaker, et al. correct for errors due to differences between transmit or receive position (col. 10, line 51 – col. 11, line 9). Fig. 8 shows the resulting scan line curvature. To calculate the error, a radius and fixed signal proportional to the angular velocity divided by the ultrasound velocity are used (col. 11, lines 10-15). Blaker, et al. assume a particular velocity, so used a fixed signal. Blaker, et al. does not determine velocity parameters that are different at different positions.

Teslawski, et al. note asymmetric oscillation (col. 5, lines 32-45). Electronics correct for the asymmetric motion (col. 6, lines 44-47). An encoder disc is used to sense absolute position (col. 6, lines 52-59). Read-only memories are used to determine positions for firing (col. 7, lines 21-31). The position is used to control firing regardless of time to sweep (col. 7, lines 44-60). Teslawski, et al. rely on position detection, so do not determine velocity parameters.

Herres and Havert, et al. do not disclose and are not cited for determining velocity parameters.

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Independent claim 14 recites a beamformer operable to set first and second scan positions as a function of first and second different velocity parameters, respectively, of a mechanically rocked array. As discussed above for claim 11, the references do not disclose different velocity parameters. Dunham also operates regardless of speed (abstract).

The dependent claims 17 and 18 depend from an independent claim, so are allowable for the same reasons.


Claim 25 is allowable for the same reasons as claim 17.

CONCLUSION:

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and seeks early allowance thereof. If for any reason, the Examiner is unable to allow the application but believes that an interview would be helpful to resolve any issues, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at (650) 943-7554 or Craig Summerfield at (312) 321-4726.

PLEASE MAIL CORRESPONDENCE TO: Respectfully submitted,

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